

# IOWA BIRD LIFE



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## A CHALLENGE TO IOWA BIRD-SPOTTERS

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Many changes have been wrought in the bird life of Iowa during the present century. Intensified farming has caused the last of the native prairies to go under the plough. The prairie birds have been pushed back, many of them entirely out of Iowa. The Burrowing Owl will soon be a memory to most Iowans. Many birds formerly common in eastern Iowa, such as the Orchard Oriole, are now rare. Philip A. DuMont, *Birds of Iowa*, page 136, says he feels the grackle has been instrumental in driving it out. Starlings, Grackles and Blue Jays all are guilty of breaking up the nests of many song birds and driving them away.

Vast changes are taking place in Texas, New Mexico and perhaps elsewhere. In Texas, huge tractors pulling heavy steel beams grind across the land, knocking down every living tree and shrub. In New Mexico the mesquite and many other trees and shrubs with deep root systems are being uprooted in all areas adjacent to dams and irrigation ditches. Every time one of these projects is completed, it means the loss of nesting sites for many birds. Each lost area means a shift of bird population, and it could well be to the north.

While roadside spraying is killing much of the vegetation used by nesting birds in Iowa, we are also planting trees. Farmers are very active lately in planting shelter-belts and windbreaks. The planting of numerous varieties of conifers is also underway as a future cash crop. Thus while we are destroying many nesting sites, we are also creating some which might interest certain kinds of birds to nest therein.

Year after year the waterfowl and shore-bird populations have been decreasing. Song-bird populations are not increasing. In fact they are decreasing rapidly in most urban areas due to another sub-division in the area we formerly called our "warbler woods". What, then, is there to keep up continued interest in bird study? This writer believes the challenge is in finding new and rare birds in Iowa. New in the sense that some species are actually moving in from the south and the west. Others are new in the sense they have been overlooked in late years because of the lack of earnest, concentrated field work.

I think the nesting of the Summer Tanager in Iowa in several areas is a fine case in point. DuMont brought the nesting records up to the date of 1933. Active field work, as pointed out by Jerry W. Lange in *Iowa Bird Life* for September, 1961, brought to light recent nestings. This tanager is also now a regular nesting bird in Waubesa State Park in Fremont County. As a visitor it has even penetrated to the Sioux City area.

How is the average Iowan going to study any rare bird that shows up? It is obvious it won't be from scientific collecting, for that is now reserved for nearly only those connected with an institution of higher learning or a

museum. The individual bird student would have a difficult time getting a collecting permit; in fact, even a permit to pick up dead birds along highways might be hard to obtain. What, then, can he do? One answer is to apply for a banding permit. The other thing to do is to get a pair of good binoculars, go afield in the most inaccessible areas to be found, and just do hard field work. For credulity's sake have someone with you or, better still, two somebodies to verify any rare findings.

What are some of the birds which in the past have been reported in Iowa, but for various reasons have not been reported in late years? One would be the Prairie Warbler. This warbler is a regular summer resident in northeast Kansas and a common nesting warbler in Missouri. Bennitt, **Check-list of Birds of Missouri**, 1932, gives it for southern Missouri; but now, with the recent northeast Kansas records, it is probably reasonable to assume it is nesting all over Missouri.

The Yellow-throated Warbler was formerly a rare summer resident, but considerable field work is necessary to establish its range in Iowa. It is considered an uncommon summer resident in Missouri; as probably breeding in southeastern Kansas; and has been reported as breeding rarely in southeastern Nebraska.

The Hooded Warbler is listed by DuMont as formerly a rare summer resident in southern Iowa. It is listed from Missouri as a common summer resident, but more southerly. In Kansas it was formerly a common summer bird, but has not been found lately as nesting. Mr. L. O. Horsky, of Omaha, Nebraska, reports the Hooded Warbler as a breeding bird in southeastern Nebraska.

The Lazuli Bunting is certainly a bird to be looked for in Iowa. There are specimens from Missouri and many records from Kansas, becoming rarer easterly. The writer now has four records for Sioux City and the Iowa region, two records from the South Dakota side of the Big Sioux River, and one record from Dakota County, Nebraska. Mrs. Willetta Lueshen of Wisner, Nebraska, has been banding Lazuli Buntings at her banding station in recent years. Mrs. Harold R. Peasley of Des Moines has an interesting record for the Lazuli Bunting from Indianola on May 20, 1935.

The most startling bird that should be added to the Iowa scene is the Painted Bunting. It has been found in various places in Missouri and as far north as Mound City in summer. In Kansas this bunting is a fairly common summer nester, especially in the northeast part of the state. In a recent letter from Professor Richard F. Johnston, from the University of Kansas Museum, I learned that the Painted Bunting is a local summer resident all through eastern Kansas, and some even nest in the city of Lawrence every summer. The first record of the Painted Bunting in Iowa came from Estherville, where Mr. M. L. Jones on Memorial Day, 1956, found a male bird and was able to call in others to enjoy this amazing "first".

One sparrow which could appear on the Iowa scene at any time is the Pine-woods Sparrow. It is given as a rare summer resident in Missouri, but recent sight and specimen records from northeast Kansas bring it ever nearer to Iowa as a reality. While the writer does not know this sparrow in life, he would be inclined to suggest the utmost caution be used in identifying this bird. According to most authorities, the song of the Pine-woods Sparrow is just the reverse of that of the Field Sparrow, which should give a pretty good first clue.

The Black-headed Grosbeak should not be forgotten when looking for rare birds in Iowa, for it has been found nesting in northeast Missouri and also in north-central Kansas. The writer has found this grosbeak nesting at Yankton, South Dakota, which is not far from the Iowa border.

The interesting Say's Phoebe, which DuMont lists as a former casual summer resident, is another fine bird for which to be on the watch. Mr. and Mrs. John Lueshen of Wisner, Nebraska, less than forty miles from the Iowa state line, have been logging the nesting activities of various pairs of Say's Phoebes for many years. This phoebe could well be the first bird to be replaced on the active summer list, by some really intense field work during the season in western Iowa, from Sioux City south to the Missouri state line.

As long as we are on the trail of rare birds in Iowa, mention should be made that the Carolina Chickadee can be found in Iowa on occasion. Although it is a common permanent resident of Missouri, it also moves around somewhat, since there is an Iowa specimen record, and Fred J. Pierce and Charles J. Spiker had a sight record of one on October 7, 1929, in Buchanan County.

If you know of a dense stand of red cedar trees heavy with fruit, visit it often this winter for you might find one of the West's most exciting songsters, the Townsend's Solitaire. Once again we turn to that sharp-eyed bird observer, Mr. M. L. Jones of Estherville, who reported seeing a solitaire in that area many times during December, 1958. Since the writer saw his first wintering Townsend's Solitaire in Iowa on December 26, 1956, he has seen seven more solitaires in western Iowa and one at Vermillion, South Dakota. They have also advanced on occasion to eastern Iowa, with one observed November 25, 1954, by Peter Petersen Jr., at Eagle Point Park in Clinton.

The challenge is now up to you as members of the Iowa Ornithologists Union to add a new bird to the state list or to replace birds that have been off of our list for many years. Hard and extensive field work is the answer. Occasionally a rare bird will actually come to your back door, but more often the bird-spotter has to get out and "hit the brush", as the late Fred M. Dille used to say when we were collecting out on the Niobrara River in Nebraska.

Good luck afield!

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## FALL MEETING AT UNION SLOUGH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

DR. MYRLE BURK

Rural Route #2  
WATERLOO, IOWA

Bird watchers and bird banders from Wisconsin, South Dakota, Nebraska, Illinois, Minnesota, and Iowa migrated to Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, in Kossuth County, September 16-17, 1961. Harold Burgess, Titonka, Manager of the Refuge, was host to a joint meeting of the Inland Bird Banding Association and the Iowa Ornithologists' Union.

The societies convened in the Algona High School Auditorium, at 1:30 P.M., Saturday afternoon. Ed Peartree, president of I.B.B.A., presided. Dr. C. C. Shrieck, Mayor of Algona, welcomed the groups praising those who are interested in the investigation of the causes of the decrease in birdlife since the pioneers settled in this area, and noting appreciation of the work being done at Union Slough.

Dr. William Green, Upper Mississippi Refuge Management Biologist, Winona, Minnesota, responded to Mayor Shrieck. He cordially welcomed the bird banders and bird watchers to the refuge areas and invited them to use these areas (with permission) any time except during fall migration.

Peartree introduced Mrs. John Lueschen, Wisner, Nebraska, who described her experiences "Cliff Swallow Banding in Stanton County, Nebraska". When this project began the Cliff Swallows banded were nesting under bridges spanning the Elkhorn River and Turtle Hole. A nine meter mist net was fastened to the upper end of long bamboo fishing poles. Two assistants, holding the net taut, lowered it over the side of the bridge, bringing the net as close to the water as possible; the third person frightened the birds from the nests into the net. When six or eight birds were caught, the net was raised, still held taut, and the bander removed, banded, and released the birds. Birds were caught either leaving or returning to the nest. In 1960, the old bridge was torn out and replaced with a concrete structure. Banding was resumed in June, 1961. Seventy-five birds were caught in two hours; two of these had been banded in 1958. Throughout the investigation, Mrs. Lueschen used a nine meter net; next season she plans to try an eighteen meter.

Dr. William Green, who is also a member of the Technical Committee of the Mississippi Flyway Advisory Council, discussed Wood Duck banding, illustrated with slides, along the Mississippi. Little had been known of the habits of the Wood Duck, even though as a game bird it ranks high. During fifteen years of bag checks they ranked fourth place of all birds taken, even with restrictions on numbers shot. In 1958, the Advisory Council initiated a program of Wood Duck banding in the Mississippi Flyway. Various types of baited traps were used. A modification of the old Ohio folding trap, which can be transported on water, was used on the Mississippi; with a floating trap being used successfully at Union Slough. The floating trap is most efficient if the water level is fluctuating. Trained Golden Retriever dogs were used to catch young ducks raised on the river. These dogs, which have soft mouths, brought the young birds to the shore uninjured.

Harold Burgess, Titonka, Iowa, using slides, showed the activities of wildlife on Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was established in 1938 as a protective area for migrating waterfowl. Studies show that it is also becoming a nesting area. Mallards, Blue-winged Teal, Wood Ducks, and other species nest and rear their young here. The nest of the Shoveler was found for the first time this year, (1961). Although there are no previous records of American Widgeon nesting in Iowa a nest containing eight eggs was found.

The film and discussion by Paul Downing, Highland Park, Illinois, on "Chimney Swift Banding" held the tense attention of the audience. Climbing 60 to 90 foot chimneys to trap Chimney Swifts compares only to the feats of C. L. Broley, the Eagle-bander in Florida. To answer the question of where Chimney Swifts winter Paul Downing and a group of four or more helpers band the Chimney Swifts roosting in large chimneys 40 to 90 feet in height. Swifts roost in these chimneys in enormous flocks; as many as 25,000 have been estimated to enter one chimney. They do not roost in the chimney in a single layer, but descend to a fixed depth and then cling to each other in layers. The trap is placed over the chimney and causes the disturbed birds to fly into a gathering cage. When full it is lowered to the ground, where they are banded and released. The film graphically showed the means of catching the Swifts.

Dean Roosa, presiding at the evening session, introduced Forrest G. Milikin, President of the I.O.U., who welcomed those participating and thanked Peter C. Petersen, Jr. for co-ordinating this fine fall meeting. A letter from the Cedar Falls Audubon Society reminding us of the spring convention to be held at Cedar Falls was read.

The film "Land of the Prairie Ducks" told of research conducted to learn more of the feeding habits and movements of the ducks and their broods and a method of coloring the ducklings. A red dye was injected into the egg and red ducklings hatched so the field biologists could easily observe and record their activity. If conditions are favorable, 500 ducks per square mile are produced in the pothole country in contrast of from 0 to 5 ducks per square mile elsewhere. 67% of the banded ducks reported were raised in the prairie pothole area. Unfortunately, extensive drainage of this land is reducing the size of the breeding area drastically and the number of ducks is rapidly declining.

Mrs. Eveline McElrae, a visitor from New Zealand, compared conservation problems and the avifauna of her country with those of ours. The introduction of weasels and other mammals resulted in the destruction of the eggs and fledglings of the native birds and the extinction of many during the last 100 years. Among the more common native birds is the large beautiful pigeon, the parson bird, a beautiful singer, the bellbird, two species of robins, noted for their friendliness, and the fantail, which gathers insects disturbed by people walking. The kiwi, with hairlike feathers and lacking tail or wings, is nocturnal and lives in the forest; it is not easily seen. The cuckoos, unlike those of the United States, have the parasitic habit of laying their eggs in the nests of smaller birds.

Richard Toltzman of the State Conservation Commission described the Buffalo Creek State Game Management Area and others located near Algonia. In Iowa 107,000 acres, mostly in the northwest, are devoted to game management. Camping is restricted, but the areas offer recreation to many types of observers.

Dr. William Green in his discussion of "Techniques for Wildlife and Plant Photography" described the use and value of the reflex type and the non-reflex type cameras, the scope; camera fans voted the information very instructive and valuable.

The evening program ended with a fine film presented by Dr. Everett and Dr. Eunice Christiansen, Spencer, of a bird watching trip along the Atlantic seacoast to Florida.

Sunday morning Harold Burgess led the observers on a field trip to the Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge and the Buffalo Creek Game Management Area. Methods of trapping and the banding of young Wood Ducks were observed. The various types of habitats and bird and animal life in relation to vegetation interested the ecologists.

At noon the hungry birders refreshed themselves with a fine picnic lunch at the Refuge Recreation Area before heading home. The very much appreciated part was the hot coffee served by Mr. and Mrs. Burgess.

For a memorable meeting, the members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union express their deepest thanks

1. To Dean Roosa and Peter C. Petersen Jr. for providing an instructive and entertaining program.

2. To the members of the Inland Bird Banding Association for their fine contributions.

3. To Mr. and Mrs. Harold Burgess for their thoughtful and gracious hospitality.

4. To the Chamber of Commerce of Algona which cooperated in arrangements for the meeting.

5. To the School System of Algona for the use of the High School Auditorium.

6. To those who contributed to the program, viz., Mrs. John Lueschen, Dr. William Green, Paul Downing, Harold Burgess, Richard Toltzman, Mrs. Eveline McElnea and Dr. Everett and Dr. Eunice Christiansen.

7. To the owners and workers of the Titonka Cafe who deftly served the hungry birdwatchers a delicious and most satisfying breakfast so early in the morning.

Birds observed in the vicinity of Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, September 16 and 17, 1961.

Pied-billed Grebe, White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Common Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, American Bittern, Canada Goose, Mallard, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Wood Duck, Redhead, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Pigeon Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Common Gallinule, American Coot, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Common Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Herring Gull, Caspian Tern, Black Tern, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Western Kingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Traill's Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted

Nuthatch, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Eastern Bluebird, Water Pipit, Starling, Solitary Vireo, Palm Warbler, Yellowthroat, House Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Woodpecker, Redwinged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, American Goldfinch, Savannah Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Song Sparrow.

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### ATTENDANCE

#### IOWA

ALGONA:—Jeff Allen, A. C. Buchanan, Dr. P. O. Dorweiler, Mr. and Mrs. Don Hutchison, Helen Hutchison, Mrs. June Maudsley, James P. McEldon, Lyle Rudun, Dr. C. C. Shrieck, Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Smith. AMES:—John Hart. CASTALIA:—Mr. and Mrs. Roy Schultz. CEDAR FALLS:—Dr. and Mrs. Martin L. Grant, Annette Haffner, Lucile Howe, John Moeding, Rodger and Tommy Moon, David Rose, Mrs. Charles Schwanke, Maxine Schwanke. CLINTON:—Dr. and Mrs. Ross C. King. DAVENPORT:—Lewis Blevins, Peter C. Petersen, Jr., Mike Yeast. DECORAH:—David L. Anciaux, Robert Daubendiek, Frederick Leshner. DES MOINES:—Mr. and Mrs. Woodward H. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Brooke. FARRAGUT:—Mr. and Mrs. S. E. McAllister. GILMORE CITY:—Mr. and Mrs. Sewall Van Alstine. HAMBURG:—Mr. and Mrs. Fitzhugh Diggs. LANSING:—Patt Lake. LEHIGH:—Dean Roosa. MADRID:—Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Partridge. MARION:—Mr. and Mrs. Robert Liljedahl. MARSHALLTOWN:—Mrs. Homer Rinehart, Mrs. Helen Grimes. MOUNT VERNON:—Seddie Cogswell, Dr. J. Harold Ennis. OGDEN:—Jim Keenan. OELWEIN:—Mr. and Mrs. Earl Alton. OTTUMWA:—Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Ayres, Jr., Mrs. M. K. Hallberg. PERRY:—Eugene Brady. SHELL ROCK:—Mrs. Clyde Pettijohn. SIGOURNEY:—Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Millikin. SIOUX CITY:—Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. P. B. Davison, Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Hanna, Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Nickolson, Gertrude Weaver. SPENCER:—Dr. Everett and Dr. Eunice Christensen. TITONKA:—Mr. and Mrs. Harold Burgess and family, Mr. and Mrs. Bonno Schutter. WALLINGFORD:—Richard E. Toltzman. WATERLOO:—Dr. Myrle M. Burk, Russel Hays, Mabelle Hinckley, Rea Hutchison, Margaret Nagel, Mr. and Mrs. John Osness, Nick Osness, Pearl Rader.

#### MINNESOTA—

CASON:—Forrest Stranad. LE ROY:—Don Orke. WINONA:—Dr. W. E. Green.

#### ILLINOIS:—

APPLE RIVER:—Terance Ingram. BLUE ISLAND:—Karl Bartel. HIGHLAND PARK:—Paul Downing. ROCKFORD:—Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Smith.

#### NEBRASKA

WISNER:—Mr. and Mrs. John Lueshen

#### SOUTH DAKOTA

SIOUX FALLS:—Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Findley

#### WISCONSIN

OCONOMOWOC:—Ed Peartree

#### DUNEDIN, NEW ZEALAND—Mrs. Eveline McElrea

Total—101

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## IOWA BIRD BANDING SUMMARY FOR 1961

DEAN M. ROOSA,

Lehigh, Iowa

An increase in the number of birds banded in Iowa was noted in each of the past two years due chiefly to the advent of mist nets and the addition of a few new banders. During 1961, 5052 birds of 134 species were banded. It is hoped that in future years banders can work more closely together in doing projects for gathering data which can only be gotten through banding. Following is a list of banders and their activity this year to November 15th.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ayres, 208 East Second Street, Ottumwa. Received permits last year, banded 93 individuals of 21 species. Also have permit for Kansas.

Lewis Blevins, 2003 E. 12th Street, Davenport. Received permit in 1958. Banded three species, 9 individuals this year.

Eugene Brady, 2202 Willis Avenue, Perry. Got a permit this year. Banded 20 species, 53 individuals.

George Crane, Mt. Pleasant. Received permit in 1958. Banded 40 species, 267 individuals this year, lifetime total of 1,341 birds.

Mrs. W. C. DeLong, Box 398, Shenandoah. Received permit in 1955. Banded 9 species and 17 birds this year. Total of 1,211 birds in Iowa. She does most of her banding under her son's permit during the summer in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colo.

Dr. J. Harold Ennis, Cornell College, Mt. Vernon. Received permit in 1926, has been inactive lately. A Yellow-shafted Flicker he banded at Tama, Iowa, was found dead in the winter in Louisiana.

Dr. Martin Grant, State College of Iowa, Cedar Falls. Obtained permit in 1925. Banded 695 birds of 78 species this year, with lifetime total of 2,086 birds of 125 species. He is doing intensive banding in a few localities to determine the extent to which birds return to the same area.

Myrle L. Jones, Ft. Defiance State Park, Estherville. Received permit in 1933 and has recently banded his 13,000th bird of 127 species with a total this year of 360 birds of 47 species. Myrle has done research thru banding in an attempt to determine if birds were involved in the spread of oak wilt disease. He puts on many banding demonstrations at the park for youth groups.

T. James Lewis, 2712 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, and Montana State College. Got permit last year, 14 species, 19 individuals banded this year.

Mrs. William Martin, Cedar Falls. Has had permit for several years, but was inactive this year.

Carroll Oelke, 240 South Locust, New Hampton. Obtained permit in 1960. Banded 148 birds of 11 species. Total thus far is 172 birds.

Peter C. Petersen Jr. Davenport Public Museum, Davenport. Obtained permit in 1957 and this year banded 2,539 birds of 114 species in Iowa plus considerable banding out of state as his permit covers all mid-western states, enabling him to do experimental mist netting during the breeding season in any habitats. He has a lifetime total of about 7,000 individuals of 179 species. Pete has banded colonies of gulls and intensively bands in Pine Hill Cemetery each fall.

Dean M. Roosa, Lehigh. Received permit in 1958 and this year banded 927 birds of 60 species in Iowa plus some in Minnesota. Total thus far of 2,414 birds of 88 species. Has special interest in banding hawks and swallows.

Foster Rutledge, 1008 Cedar, Atlantic. Received permit in 1960 for the purpose of banding hawks and owls, inactive this year.

Donald J. Schmidt, Keokuk Jr. High School, Keokuk. Obtained permit this year and plans to use banding as a science club project.

Robert Trial, R.R. #2, Aledo, Illinois. Obtained permit in 1959, banded 6 individuals of 5 species. Does most of his banding in Illinois near Aledo and at Lake Calumet, Chicago.

Although a few more banders are registered, no reply was received and are presumed inactive. The Fish and Wildlife Service lists 94 banders for Iowa, many of which are out of state or deceased. If anyone is an active bander and was not contacted, please advise the author.

The following is a list of birds banded in Iowa, Jan. 1 - November 15, exclusive of the banding done by the Conservation Commission.

Double-crested Cormorant	1	Downy Woodpecker	62
Green Heron	2	Eastern Kingbird	9
Least Bittern	3	Great Crested Flycatcher	7
Mallard	1	Eastern Phoebe	20
Wood Duck	1	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	32
Turkey Vulture	2	Acadian Flycatcher	7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	7	Traill's Flycatcher	36
Red-tailed Hawk	5	Least Flycatcher	55
Rough-legged Hawk	1	Eastern Wood Pewee	19
Sparrow Hawk	54	Horned Lark	1
Sora	6	Bank Swallow	30
Killdeer	1	Rough-winged Swallow	7
Common Snipe	3	Barn Swallow	27
Solitary Sandpiper	1	Cliff Swallow	152
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	Purple Martin	106
Least Sandpiper	4	Blue Jay	101
Mourning Dove	38	Black-capped Chickadee	129
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	3	Tufted Titmouse	28
Black-billed Cuckoo	7	White-breasted Nuthatch	44
Screech Owl	12	Red-breasted Nuthatch	12
Great Horned Owl	6	Brown Creeper	14
Saw-whet Owl	8	House Wren	124
Whip-poor-will	3	Winter Wren	6
Common Nighthawk	6	Carolina Wren	1
Chimney Swift	402	Short-billed Marsh Wren	6
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	3	Catbird	173
Belted Kingfisher	4	Brown Thrasher	97
Yellow-shafted Flicker	50	Robin	201
Red-bellied Woodpecker	8	Wood Thrush	5
Red-headed Woodpecker	2	Hermit Thrush	12
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	10	Swainson's Thrush	72
Hairy Woodpecker	5	Gray-cheeked Thrush	27

## BIRD BANDING SUMMARY

83

Veery	7	Canada Warbler	14
Eastern Bluebird	26	American Redstart	12
Golden-crowned Kinglet	110	House Sparrow	14
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	152	Eastern Meadowlark	6
Cedar Waxwing	3	Western Meadowlark	1
Loggerhead Shrike	7	Redwinged Blackbird	225
Starling	8	Baltimore Oriole	16
Bell's Vireo	4	Rusty Blackbird	2
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	Common Grackle	139
Solitary Vireo	11	Brown-headed Cowbird	18
Red-eyed Vireo	90	Scarlet Tanager	3
Warbling Vireo	9	Cardinal	95
Black-and-white Warbler	16	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	169
Golden-winged Warbler	2	Indigo Bunting	30
Blue-winged Warbler	1	Dickcissel	2
Tennessee Warbler	48	Evening Grosbeak	1
Orange-crowned Warbler	19	Purple Finch	51
Nashville Warbler	73	Pine Siskin	1
Yellow Warbler	18	American Goldfinch	78
Magnolia Warbler	20	Red Crossbill	13
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	Rufous-sided Towhee	5
Myrtle Warbler	50	Grasshopper Sparrow	1
Blackburnian Warbler	6	Vesper Sparrow	1
Chestnut-sided Warbler	8	Slate-colored Junco	301
Bay-breasted Warbler	7	Tree Sparrow	59
Blackpoll Warbler	13	Chipping Sparrow	7
Palm Warbler	2	Clay-colored Sparrow	1
Ovenbird	41	Field Sparrow	22
Northern Waterthrush	23	Harris Sparrow	7
Louisiana Waterthrush	1	White-crowned Sparrow	7
Kentucky Warbler	2	White-throated Sparrow	374
Connecticut Warbler	5	Fox Sparrow	113
Mourning Warbler	16	Lincoln's Sparrow	36
Yellowthroat	41	Swamp Sparrow	39
Yellow-breasted Chat	3	Song Sparrow	144
Wilson's Warbler	27		

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 Individuals 5161

Species 135

## FROM A BIRD OBSERVER'S NOTEBOOK

WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH

3119 Second Street  
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

The activities of birds in seeking out and in some cases storing food is a never-ending source of interest to a serious student of bird life. Each incident is often noteworthy in itself and even if reported by someone else previously it still adds to your pleasure and encourages one to be ever alert.

Mr. Francis H. Allen reported many years ago that Baltimore Orioles sometimes fed on the flowers of the trumpet creeper, but it was not until August, 1961, that this observer saw the same feeding process. Mr. E. A. Emery of Sioux City, Iowa, told me that the orioles were ruining many of the blossoms on his trumpet creeper and I went over to investigate. The Baltimore Oriole soon returned and we watched how he tore out the bottom of an un-opened bloom and proceeded to nibble and sip at the contents. Investigation showed that several orioles were feeding on this particular trumpet creeper and dozens of the un-opened blooms had been eaten into. The bloom would eventually open, but was damaged and often was just half of a normal bloom when it did open.

The storing of food by Blue Jays continues to be of interest when you see them seize upon a new opportunity. Last fall Robins had been digging out grubs in a small bare area in the lawn and had left numerous little pits in the soft earth. A Blue Jay with a bit of food to store, flew down to the area and proceeded to stuff the food in one of these holes and push the dirt over it. This procedure was noticed several times during the course of the day.

Certain birds like finches and grosbeaks often find food in rather unlikely places. Most of us think of the lilac in the spring with its lovely bloom and never give it another thought until the next year, but not so the birds. On September 6, 1958, this observer watched a half dozen migrating Rose-breasted Grosbeaks spend a long period of time prying open the seed pods on our lilacs and eat the seed. On March 22, 1961, I watched a pair of Pine Siskins feeding on the same lilacs. Goldfinches have been watched over the years often feeding on lilac seeds.

Goldfinches are about the most interesting of the door-yard birds to watch as they forage for the day. On October 22, 1961, the writer decided to watch a small flock of Goldfinches and see just what they did eat. Food was plentiful and for a wonder no one disturbed the birds for several hours and the vigil was quite revealing. They ate the seeds of the following plants: zinnia, daisy, monarda, bellflower, dragon-head, lilac, and hollyhock. They digressed from time to time to eat bits of moss; the pulp of solomon seal berries; pieces of green, ground ivy; petals of hardy chrysanthemum; and nibbled at rose hips.

Some birds, especially waxwings like to gorge themselves on the petals of fruit trees in season, but one of my greatest surprises came on May 13, 1961, when I observed a Catbird eating apple blossom petals until it was so stuffed that it finally had to stop for a rest.

## GENERAL NOTES REPORTS

August had almost normal temperature but rainfall in Des Moines was one inch below normal. September was cool and very wet with eight inches of rain in Iowa City, and ten inches in Des Moines made it the third wettest on record in the latter. October had about average temperatures, but rain was again excessive by several inches.

The general notes reports has developed considerably in the course of it's first year. More reports from all over the state are needed. It would help if each bird club would appoint a person to take notes on birds reported at meetings and forward them to Woodward Brown, 4815 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines 12, Iowa. A careful perusal of the following notes will give a good sample of the material desired. Early and late migrants, migration peaks, unusual behavior, high or low populations as compared with previous years, weather conditions which adversely or favorably affected bird life and general comments on the migration of groups of birds are all worthy of note. If you doubt the value of an observation, include it anyway. Deadlines for copy are Feb. 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1. All observations since your last report should be included.

**Grebes, Pelicans, Herons.** The first flight of Pied-billed in Sioux City was on September 25 when Wm. Youngworth saw 50. A Western Grebe observation at the Des Moines Impounding Reservoir was reported on October 22 by Miss Mary E. Peck with a second at Cedar Lake, Cedar Rapids, Nov. 12, found by Lillian Serbousek. Donald Gillespey saw 250 White Pelicans at Lamoni on October 5, while a flock of 300 on the Missouri River west of Onawa was reported by Fred J. Pierce. Fred Kent is of the opinion there were fewer egrets than usual at Iowa City.

**Ducks, Geese.** There have been few ducks and only one flock of geese reported at Des Moines, but the Youngworths estimated there were 15,000 Blues and Snows on October 18 near the Missouri River, and 75 Canadas on the seventh and 200 on the sixteenth. Kent had one flock of 100 Blues and Snows, and Fred Leshner on the fourteenth saw 200 in a mixed flock. There seemed fewer waterfowl this year at Lamoni, and Kent thinks ducks other than Wood Ducks are scarce around Iowa City. Leshner estimated 100 Wood Ducks at Cardinal Marsh, and 70 near Harper's Ferry on September 5. At the Fall Meeting at Union Slough many Wood Ducks were seen. Ducks and geese are more abundant than in any year since 1954 due to the excessive moisture in the Davenport area according to Blevins. Ned Ashton, fide Kent, reports huge duck population with geese on Clinton pool above dam 13. Maximum flock of geese numbered 5,000, about 80% Blue, the remainder Snow.

**Hawks.** There were five Turkey Vultures near Salix on September 27, according to Pierce. Petersen netted seven Sharp-shinned Hawks from September 8 to October 5 at Pine Hill Cemetery in Davenport. Gillaspey reports Red-tails and Marsh Hawks abundant due to a plentiful supply of mice. Youngworth's heaviest Red-tail flight was 25 on October 19, and Kent saw 10, mostly immatures, on the 25th. An early Harlan's Hawk was seen September 28 south of New Liberty, Scott Co. by Blevins. Milford D. Keeler of Mason City saw a Golden Eagle north of Pilot Knob State Park on October 18, and

sent a clipping with a Charles City date line of the 20th describing another which had been wounded. Dean Roosa also reported a wounded immature Golden Eagle at Goldfield on the 24th. Leshner had an early adult Bald Eagle at Harper's Ferry on September 5, and Bill Erps saw two adult Bald Eagles along the Wapsipinicon north of Long Grove on September 3. Roosa banded about 30 Sparrow Hawks this fall, and saw several times the usual number. Youngworth saw an estimated 150 Sparrow Hawks on September 23. Blevins saw a peak of 34 Sparrow Hawks in two sections in central Scott County October 3.

**Shorebirds.** Ten Gallinules were seen by Leshner at Cardinal Marsh, while several immatures were found at Union Slough. Youngworth reports 100 Coots were in the first flight on September 23, with large flights on the 19th and 21st. Gillespey noted 11 Upland Plovers flying on August 16th. The usual number of Pectorals, Stilt Sandpipers and Lesser Yellow-legs were at the Des Moines Sewage Treatment Plant during the season. Shorebirds were generally scarce at Davenport due to the high water in the mud flat areas.

**Gulls, Terns.** The only report came from Sioux City where there were flights of Ring-billed on October 11 and 19th. Hundreds of Franklin's were seen on September 27 and October 18, and on October 16 there were estimated to be thousands between Sioux City and the Iowa Great Lakes. Five Least Terns on September 7 were the last seen.

**Cuckoos, Owls.** Yellow-billed Cuckoos left Sioux City early and none was seen after September 9. Russell Hays found a Long-eared Owl at Wyth Park and one Short-eared was seen at Lamoni while the first at Davenport was seen by Blevins on October 21 and many were in Scott Co. by mid-November. Saw-whet Owls have been more common than usual at Davenport with eight netted up to November 8, the first captures being three on October 14.

**Nighthawks.** Kent heard a Whip-poor-will on August 3, and three were netted at Davenport between September 6 and 23rd. Flocks of Nighthawks were seen at Lamoni on September 5 and 7th, and Decorah on September 5 and October 3, while Youngworth mentions seven dates from August 26 to October 3. The last Nighthawk banded in Davenport was October 7.

**Woodpeckers.** Gillespey noticed flights of Red-headed on August 28 and September 6, while Youngworth saw 15 on September 9.

**Flycatchers.** Russell Hays saw Phoebe's in several locations in the Waterloo area where few had been noticed earlier. Eastern Kingbirds were unusually abundant at Lamoni the last 10 days of August. Flights of from 75 to 200 were seen at Sioux City from mid-August to early September. Empidonax Flycatchers were banded in greater numbers than previously at Pine Hill Cemetery in Davenport by Petersen due primarily to an earlier than usual start of the fall banding program. Twenty-one Yellow-bellied were banded between August 21 and September 23; five Acadian from August 26 until September 7; 30 Traill's from August 21 to September 11 and only three Least-all on September 24. The Olive-sided was observed in Des Moines more often this fall than in other years.

**Swallows.** There were large flights of Cliff and Bank Swallows but few Tree Swallows noticed at Lamoni.

**Nuthatches, Creepers.** Several Red-breasted Nuthatches have already been seen in Des Moines after being almost totally absent last year. They are also much more abundant at Davenport, with the first bird banded August 22nd.

**Wrens.** Four Winter Wrens were banded at Pine Hill Cemetery between September 8 and October 31.

**Thrushes.** Among the casualties caused by the Des Moines Airport ceilometer was a Veery, the first fall record for Polk Co. Veery was also netted for the first time at Davenport, with five banded from August 28 until September 14. Opinions vary regarding the Bluebird. Hays saw or heard only six or eight on a trip to LaCrosse and Minneapolis, but Maxine Schwanke found a flock of 24 recently. Leshner had 24 on an August date and 37 on September 24 with eight on October 3, while Youngworth thought they were "in fair numbers." Around Des Moines they have been considered scarce.

**Kinglets.** A good wave of both species was noted in Des Moines and Davenport.

**Pipits.** Gillespey saw from 12 to 50 regularly from October 19 on, and a small flock was seen north of Des Moines on October 8 by Miss Peck.

**Waxwings.** Youngworth saw 150 flycatching on September 20, while Kent noticed 400 to 500 in cedar windbreaks on October 22. Large flocks were moving over on October 30 at Pine Hill Cemetery in a southerly direction.

**Vireos.** According to Roosa this was the heaviest migration of Red-eyed he had ever seen, and 58 were banded in a month. Youngworth, on the other hand, thought the migration of all vireos "very disappointing."

**Warblers.** The migration in Des Moines was considered fair to poor except for Nashville and Orange-crowned. The waves were on September 4, 12, and 25. Youngworth called it "very discouraging" with flights on September 3, October 9 and 12 of which very few were Myrtles. Kent saw the usual number of Myrtles, while Leshner had a peak of 45 on October 1. The Prothonotaries seen by Kent on August 19 were late. The warbler migration at Davenport was steady and good in variety, twenty-one species were banded at Pine Hill Cemetery. Some of the more interesting dates were Golden-winged on September 6 and 24th, Blue-winged on August 30, Orange-crowned 19 banded from September 23 to October 25, Yellow on September 27, (rather late), Blackburnian on August 29, September 23 and 24, Chestnut-sided, eight netted between August 26 (3), and September 27, Bay-breasted seven between September 19 and 25, Blackpoll two on September 12 and one September 24, Connecticut on September 12, Mourning August 29, September 6 and 12. The best peak was September 23 and 24, when 78 Warblers, about 30% of the season's total and primarily Tennessee and Nashville, were netted despite rain.

**Icterids.** Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Union Slough and Eagle Lake the week-end of the Fall Meeting were late. Gillaspey had Brewer's following the plough from Mid-October on. Mrs. Edwin A. Getscher of Hamburg reports some unusual concentrations of blackbirds—on November 4 a mixed flock of Grackles and Red-wings settled on the equivalent of two city blocks just east of town, while to the northeast a large flock of Rusties settled. Again, on November 5 there was a flight of mixed blackbirds which milled and circled about for an hour or more.

**Fringillids.** Hays had Pine Siskins at his home for the fourth consecutive year. Roosa banded an Evening Grosbeak on September 8. The first Siskin at Pine Hill Cemetery was banded October 30, and a Clay-colored Sparrow was banded September 6. Grasshopper on October 10 and 26, Lincolns between September 18 and November 3. A Lincoln Sparrow in Des Moines on September 15 was two weeks early. Gillaspey's first Longspurs were a small flock of eight on October 29, while Petersen found none until November 5 when a flock of 30 Lapland were seen. **WOODWARD H. BROWN**, 4815 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, 12.

**A Sight Record of the Boat-tailed Grackle.** Miss C. Esther Copp of Wheatland reports that she and her sister Dolly, while fishing on October 18, 1961, were attracted by a voice which was unfamiliar in their woods. The bird responsible for the strange sounds was observed perching in nearby shrubs, on the ground and in flight at a distance of 50 feet. Miss Copp, who has observed Boat-tailed Grackles in New Orleans, identified the bird as one of this species. The Boat-tailed Grackle, while a common bird in the South, has not previously been recorded in Iowa according to Jack Musgrove.—**WOODWARD BROWN**, 4815 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines.



SNOWY OWL  
Sketch by E. W. Steffen

**Snowy Owls in Eastern Iowa.** Thus far this winter two Snowy Owl observations have come to the attention of the writer. The first was first seen by Conrad Sindt, a junior member of the Tri-City Bird Club, on October 7, 1961, near his home five miles northeast of Bettendorf, Scott County, Iowa. This bird has been present, being observed almost daily, through this date, November 15, 1961. Due to its very white plumage it is apparently a male (see cut). This individual allows approach to within seventy-five feet. Attempts were made to capture the bird using a bal chatri hawk trap baited with a hamster. The bird hit this trap twice when the nooses were of twenty lbs. test line, but was not held and probably broke nooses. A Red-tailed Hawk was able to break away from the same trap, so nooses were replaced by some made of fifty lbs. test line. The owl has not been attracted to stoop upon this trap as yet.

The second Snowy Owl was found on November 4, 1961, near Lake MacBride State Park north of Iowa City by Fred W. Kent and Tom Morrissey. It is of dark plumage and therefore likely a female bird (see cut). The bird was present for only a few days and has not been observed since.

In addition to these records there have been two observations in Illinois in the vicinity of the Tri-Cities this fall. Apparently an invasion of Snowy Owls is occurring this winter, so everyone should be on the lookout for individuals. PETER C. PETERSEN, JR., 620 East 30th Street, Davenport, Iowa.



SNOWY OWL NEAR DAVENPORT

Photo by Gary Benshoof



SNOWY OWL NEAR IOWA CITY

Photo by F. W. Kent

**Yellow Rail at Lamoni.** On September 30, 1960, I had a rare opportunity to observe a Yellow Rail at close range. I was plowing a small field of shoulder high weeds. Several times as I went around the field a small rail would fly up out of the weeds as the tractor approached and drop back down into the undergrowth after a short flight. There seemed to be several rails in the field. One bird in particular would wait until the tractor was practically upon it to fly and would drop down into the weeds again after flying only a few feet. After the second or third occurrence of this leap frog game I feared the tractor had over run and crushed the bird so I stopped and stepped down to look for it. There it was beside a clod near a tractor wheel. I quietly crouched down on my knees to look at it, only an arm length away. It peered steadily at me and I peered right back at it in breathless silence. It looked very much like a buff baby chick a few days old that has become fully feathered. We stared at each other at least a full minute. I considered attempting to clap my hand over it. On some slight movement of mine it flew up. When it flew, the white feathers in the wing were very noticeable. The other rails in the field were Sora. Weather that day was calm and sunny, after the coldest night of the month with temperatures down to 38°. J. DONALD GILLASPEY, Lamoni, Iowa.

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**Marbled Godwit in Northeast Iowa.** On August 21, 1961, Dave Anciaux and I observed a Marbled Godwit on the Upper Iowa River, one mile east of state highway 182, near New Albin, Iowa.

The bird was feeding in shallow, muddy water near a small mudflat island possibly 15 feet long by 5 feet wide. The Upper Iowa River at this point near its confluence with the Mississippi, is approximately 130 feet wide, running between steep mud banks, with meadows on either side. The Marbled Godwit was feeding within 20 feet of the south bank.

We were immediately on the alert when we noted the large size of the bird, the up-curved bill, and slate-blue legs. These three features ruled out the common large shorebirds, the Greater Yellowlegs and the Willet. Further examination, using a 20x scope at 50 yards, revealed a bill red-orange at the base and dark brown or black for the distal two inches. The belly, breast, throat, and foreneck were a clean white, and the back of the neck, head, back, and upperparts were buff brown barred with white and dark brown.

Several attempts to flush the bird by throwing clumps of dirt at it failed. Finally Dave flushed it with a clump that nearly hit the bird. With a harsh high pitched alarm squawk, the Godwit fled downstream low over the water. We were then able to observe that the upper tail coverts and upper-side of the tailfeathers were barred with dark brown, lighter brown, and white. The bird lacked the white rump characteristic of the Hudsonian God-

wit. We did not observe the underside of the bird as it flew. However, we believe that the absence of the white rump and the barred brown upperparts, plus the exceptionally large size of the bird positively identify the bird as a Marbled Godwit.

Roberts' **A Manual for the Identification of the Birds of Minnesota** states that "the adult fall and winter plumage—resembles the summer dress, but the breast is without barring and the sides marked only indistinctly." Also the juvenal plumage "is deeper and pinker, markings on neck and below absent, and upperparts, wings and tail more extensively cinnamon" consequently it is possible to find a Marbled Godwit in late summer without heavy breast markings.

According to both Peterson's **A Field Guide to the Birds of Texas** and Roberts' **Manual**, the sooty black tail and white rump with white tips on the tail feathers are positive marks identifying the Hudsonian Godwit in all plumages. This particular bird lacked these marks.

The Marbled Godwit is listed as a casual and irregular visitor in the Chicago region in **Chicagoland Birds**, published by the Chicago Natural History Museum. The **Birds of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Region**, published by the Minnesota Museum of Natural History, records three specific records of the Marbled Godwit, two in August. **Wisconsin Birds** published by The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology lists it as a rare transient visitant. **A Field List of Birds of the Tri-City Region** does not list the Marbled Godwit on its charts, but notes it as a species recorded in a nearby region, Iowa City. This refers to the Marbled Godwit seen on May 1, 1960, by Fred W. Kent and reported in the September, 1960, **Iowa Bird Life**. The June, 1961 issue of **Iowa Bird Life** contains a report in the "General Notes" of a Marbled Godwit observed on April 17, 1961, near Liscomb, Iowa by a number of people. FRED LESHER, 309 Decorah Ave., Decorah.

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#### BALD EAGLE COUNT

In cooperation with the National Audubon Society a one day Bald Eagle count will be conducted in Iowa. Everyone is welcome to join and need only record carefully all Bald Eagles that can be found in their area on Sunday, February 11, 1962, designating adults and immatures separately. Any bird having an entirely white head and tail is an adult, while a bird with some white plumage on the head or tail is in transition and should be described in detail. It would be desirable for observers planning to cover areas along the Mississippi River to notify the editor prior to the count to avoid overlap. The completed count, which may be taken on Saturday, February 10, 1962, if a conflict occurs on February 11, should be sent, along with any other Bald Eagle observations, to the editor at 620 East 30th Street, Davenport, Iowa, or Elton Fawks, Route #1, Box 112, East Moline, Illinois. Some Bald Eagles might be captured and color marked during this winter, so any observations of a color marked bird (wing primaries and tail will be painted) should also be carefully noted and reported. ed.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Alexander Wilson, Naturalist and Pioneer** by Robert Cantwell, 319 p., illus. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and New York. 1961—\$15.00.

This ambitious book is not only a biography of the man who is usually regarded as our country's first real ornithologist but it also depicts the roughness and uncertainties of the times, both in Wilson's native Scotland and in the mainly wilderness New World. A genius whose nature had many controversial facets, Wilson was referred to as "the finest poet in the America of his time". He could be moody and remote, yet even pitifully eager for friendship; and, although mistakes, misunderstandings, discouragement, poverty, and human malice made life hard for him, he did have some joyous experiences, particularly during an extended journey in the South. Despite his lack of formal education, he received substantial honor for his scholarly achievements, even if much of it came late.

His **American Ornithology**, on which he worked for many years with great dedication, is of course the chief contribution for which he is known to ornithology. He felt, as Cantwell wrote, that the tremendous numbers of birds that he saw represented "a surviving fragment of some primitive order of natural existence, native to America, the study of which might enlighten Americans to the habits of life on the immense and unknown continent they had inherited . . . The wild life of America provided a clue to a terrestrial pattern from which men had become separated, and the labor of presenting it involved at the outset an act of humility. His purpose was not to use birds as part of a man-made design, but to find, as he said, the underlying natural design in the amazing diversity of their habits, economy, form, disposition and faculties . . ."

Cantwell's biography of Wilson is a difficult book for me to appraise with critical fairness. On the whole, I should say that the biographical parts are stronger, having much more discerning scholarship behind them than the natural history parts. If one is interested in reading about Wilson and the social and economic structure to which he belonged — and it should not be forgotten that some outstanding historical figures were associated with him—the book deserves careful reading from that standpoint alone. But as concerns observations of the birds themselves, there are too many inconsistencies to allow the reader the comfort of full confidence, whether the shortcomings were those of the biographer or his subject.

It seems to me, for example, that hawks are credited with predatory skills far exceeding any that they actually possess. Further lack of someone's familiarity with birds is indicated by reference on p. 247 to the blue-winged teal being the first of the migrants to arrive in September and a hard bird to hunt, whereas, on p. 97, the same species was "shot in vast numbers as they sunned themselves in the mud on the riverbanks, the hunters approaching within twenty yards behind boats". And, when Wilson is described as following with the sights of his rifle and shooting a plunging sparrow hawk at the instant that it entered a thicket and caught a field sparrow about a hundred feet away, there are several questions of fact that come to my mind.

The appendices contain sources of information (including a lurid defamatory poem that got Wilson into trouble in his Scottish home town) and an annotated list of subscribers to **American Ornithology** that is itself good reading for its historical sidelights. The book has a useful index.—Paul L. Errington.

**Birds of the World:** A Survey of the Twenty-seven Orders and One Hundred and Fifty-five Families, by Oliver L. Austin, Jr. (Golden Press, New York, 1961; cloth & boards, 10x13½ inches, pp. 1-316, with 300 paintings by Arthur Singer, many range maps; price, First edition, \$14.95; later printings, \$17.50).

We live in a day of large, expensive books on birds. Many lavish works with superior color illustrations have been produced in recent years. The new "Birds of the World" easily takes a place at the top of the list. The title is not distinctive, having been used for several books in the past, but the book has numerous features that give it a distinctive place in ornithological literature.

It is printed in an oversized format, with a double-column page and large, clear type that invites rapid reading. Although 700 birds are shown in color, there are no "colored plates." This feature, always one of the important items in other bird books, has been done away with in the present volume. A heavy grade of paper has been used, one that takes color printing well, and the pictures and written text are mixed together on the same pages throughout the book. This typographical arrangement formerly was seen mostly in children's books. However startling an innovation, in the new Austin book it is a pleasing combination, probably to be followed by other publishers in the future. It has the advantage of using all the available space; there are no blank pages.

This book will give the bird student and casual reader the best grasp of the divisions of birds of the world he has ever had. Beginning with the lowest orders of birds—Kiwis, Ostriches, Rheas, Cassowaries—it goes through the entire classification arrangement, ending with the highest groups of perching songbirds. Each order of birds has its prominent members pictured on the text page, so that a Bustard or a Touraco, for example, is not just a name but a living bird that looks ready to spring off the page. We find that the birds of prey of the world range from the huge Andean Condor, 52 inches, down to the Red-thighed Falconet of southeast Asia, only 6 to 7 inches long.

The text is exactly the right accompaniment for a book aimed at the general reading public. It is lively and readable, packed with interesting facts and scientific information. The author handles the broad subject very skillfully, drawing from the voluminous literature to make an absorbing book of slightly more than 300 pages. A scientist who can write on a subject of worldwide scope and in a style to interest all classes of readers, has great versatility. We believe Dr. Austin has accomplished this feat. His book will be read avidly by people who would shy away from a scientific treatise on birds.

Range maps in color are a valuable adjunct to the text. Strange names of bird families now assume a geographical location.

There will be much enthusiasm for the work of the artist, Arthur Singer, a newcomer to bird books. Animation characterizes his paintings. Every bird seems to be perfect. Each feather is there in detailed form. Perspective and shading are faultless. The layout of pictures and text on the same pages did not permit backgrounds. There are a few exceptions, such as the gulls with a fishing village in the distance, which Mr. Singer handles expertly. Those who have been waiting for a successor to the late Louis Agassiz Fuertes may be ready to bestow the honor on Arthur Singer.

This new book has the stature of a very fine, unusual publication in a crowded field of bird literature. As a survey of all the bird families of the world, with a lucid description of structural and behavioral affinities, it is above anything thus far written in popular style. Appealing to the general reader, it will be especially valuable as an educational text. For thousands of people a new world of bird life will open. It is a book to grace the library table—to be dipped into occasionally or read steadily from cover to cover.—Fred J. Pierce.

**A Gathering of Shore Birds** by Henry Marion Hall, edited by Roland C. Clement, illustrated by John Henry Dick. The Devin-Adair Co., New York—1960—\$10.00.

This book was proclaimed to "blend the scientific with the popular, serving both as a reference and as delightful reading". In the opinion of this reviewer it falls short of the mark as a reference work despite Mr. Clements excellent efforts.

Many of Dr. Hall's species sketches have appeared as articles in the **Audubon Magazine** and are quite readable. Their literary merit greatly outweighs their ornithological appeal. Mr. Clements has done much to give the book some backbone and body. All illustrations are black and white but are nevertheless very well done and show the characteristics of each species.

Many small errors can be found but several stood out. In general ranges skim over midwestern areas. For example, the Purple Sandpiper is not mentioned as wintering on the Great Lakes where it is now found regularly. The description of the two species of dowitchers lacks the detail necessary for field identification of specimen in the hand, which has become more commonplace for the field student with the widespread use of mist nets. The tarsus length, which is an excellent determining characteristic, is not mentioned.

In addition to the sketches of the 57 species of shorebirds found in North America with regularity this book has brief notes on accidentals and the South American shorebirds as well as a bibliography. While this volume is a nice addition to any library, it is hardly the last word regarding shorebirds. ed.

**Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts** by Samuel D. Robbins, Jr.—Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Madison, Wisconsin, 1961—\$1.75 (paper) obtainable from Harold G. Kruse, Hickory Hill Farm, Loganville, Wisconsin.

A collection of reprints from the **Passenger Pigeon**. The first appeared in 1953 and others were published irregularly in the ensuing years. Maps accompany the text to aid in the location of the areas. Most accounts list birds to be expected in various areas, but little habitat description is included. It is always difficult to obtain uniformity when many contributors collaborate in a publication. A revision of the earlier maps and any changes brought about by encroaching civilization would have been welcome. Inclusion of the address of the local contributor or a source for acquisition of the most up to date data such as a museum or college science department could have made up for the time lapse.

Those vacationing in Wisconsin or passing through the state, especially the southeastern part, would find this book useful. It supplements and is more recent than Pettingill. Little material from the usual vacation areas, chiefly due to their low population of birders, is included. ed.

**A Laboratory and Field Manual of Ornithology**—Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. Third Edition—Burgess Publishing Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota—1961—\$5.00.

The latest edition Dr. Pettingill's book, which is the standard college manual for ornithological classes, contains much useful information for the average bird student. This edition was first printed in 1956, but the most recent printing brings the appendices of references up to date through October 1, 1960.

Of the twenty sections only three are chiefly study directions. Of the remaining seventeen two are almost entirely explanatory text and the remainder are over half text rather than study directions. The most useful sections for most birders are those on distribution, migration, field identification, bird songs and the appendices. Many of the remaining sections are an excellent source for birders to gain an acquaintanceship with some of the more technical aspects of ornithology which they often ignore completely.

A copy of an earlier edition was given to me as I began high school and did much to stimulate my interest in the more scientific facets of ornithology. The appendix on preparation of a paper was of tremendous assistance in my first efforts. This book is often overlooked as merely a "college manual" by those unfamiliar with it. It should be one of the cornerstones for the working library of anyone with even a semi-serious interest in ornithology.

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**The Auklet.** The fall meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union at Washington, D.C., saw the appearance of another issue of **The Auklet, An Occasional Journal for Ornithologists**. It is labeled Vol. 5, No. 1, and is the 20th in a series that began in 1920 and has continued intermittently ever since. Although a two-year average is indicated, publication has been uneven, and there was a nine-year interval between 1938 and 1947 and seven years between 1950 and 1957. Distribution of the **Journal** is made at the various meetings of the A.O.U.

As a serious magazine, it is serious only in its attempt to be funny. It is a burlesque on the sedate and serious **Auk**, which is better known to bird students.

The new issue is filled with the usual zany material, productive of many a laugh. It has a full-page photograph of one of our well-known bird photographers whose initials are F.W.K. and who lives at Iowa City when he is not out in the swamp. The picture looks like the real McCoy, but the man has been known to produce trick photos and in the present case is not above suspicion. Having one's photo in **The Auklet** is a dubious honor and we would not think of revealing his identity. It is well that no name is given with the picture and he can hide behind the cloak of anonymity.—Fred J. Pierce.

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The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

Publications of the Union: Mimeographed letters, 1923-1928; "The Bulletin," 1929-1930; "Iowa Bird Life," beginning 1931.

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